

## Message Text

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40

ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ISO-00 PM-07 L-03 NSC-07 CIAE-00

DODE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 PA-04 RSC-01 USIA-15 PRS-01

SPC-03 AID-20 EB-11 COME-00 TRSE-00 INT-08 XMB-07

OPIC-12 DRC-01 NEA-10 /164 W  
----- 067890

R 121030Z MAR 74

FM AMEMBASSY ROME

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3668

AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN

INFO AMEMBASSY COTONOU

AMEMBASSY LAGOS

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

US MISSION EC BRUSSELS 4902

C O N F I D E N T I A L ROME 3388

1. SUMMARY: AMBASSADOR ROBERT S. SMITH, EN ROUTE TO TAKE UP DUTIES IN ABIDJAN, SPENT MARCH 7 BRUSSELS AND MARCH 8 PARIS IN CONSULTATION RESPECTIVELY WITH EEC AND GOF OFFICIALS. IN BRUSSELS, ACCOMPANIES BY USEC OFFICER, HE MET WITH DURIEUX, DIRECTOR FOR TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT, AND COLLEAGUES, WITH MAURICE FOLEY, DEPUTY DIRECTOR FOR COOPERATION AND DEVELOPMENT, AND WITH FERRANDI, MANAGING DIRECTOR OF FED. IN PARIS, ACCOMPANIED BY EMBOFFS, HE MET WITH AUDIBERT OF FAC AND WITH REBEYROL, DIRECTOR AFRICAN AND MALAGASY AFFAIRS OF QUAI, AND ALONE WITH JACQUES FOCCART, SECRETARY-GENERAL FOR AFRICAN AND MALAGASY COMMUNITY, OF ELYSEE. WHILE MOST COMMENTS WERE LAUDATORY OF PRESIDENT HOUPHOUET'S ROLE AND SUCCESS OF IVOIRIAN ECONOMY, SOME EUROPEANS EXPRESSED CONCERN OVER POLITICAL IMPLICATIONS FOR IVORY COAST OF LARGE NUMBER FRENCH TECHNICIANS, ADVISORS AND MANAGERS NOW THERE, NUMBER WHICH IS INCREASING DUE TO DEMANDS OF IVOIRIAN ECONOMY AND AT BEHEST OF HOUPHOUET.

2. DURIEUX AND STAFF BRIEFED SMITH ON PRESENT STATE OF EC-AFRICAN  
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NEGOTIATIONS ON COMPREHENSIVE ASSOCIATION ARRANGEMENTS. THEY

BELIEVE AFRICAN SOLIDARITY IN NEGOTIATIONS WILL CONTINUE THROUGH FORTHCOMING DAKAR (AFRICAN MINISTERS) AND KINGSTON, JAMAICA (AFRICAN, CARIBBEAN, PACIFIC AND EUROPEAN MINISTERS) SESSIONS. THEY ALSO SEE FURTHER COMPROMISES COMING FROM BOTH SIDES.

3. FOLEY, EX-UK LABOR MP AND MINISTER OF STATE FOR AFRICA, WHO HAS FOLLOWED AFRICA FOR MANY YEARS, AGREES THAT GOIC WILL STICK WITH AFRICAN MAJORITY ON RELATIONS WITH EEC, PARTICULARLY BECAUSE HOUPHOUET ANXIOUS MAINTAIN AND STRENGTHEN COMMERCIAL LINKS WITH NIGERIA. AT SAME TIME, HE SEES IVORY COAST IN GOOD POSITION TO BENEFIT FROM INDUSTRIAL LINKS WITH EUROPE.

4. FERRANDI REVIEWED EXTENSIVE FED ACTIVITIES IN IVORY COAST.

5. AUDIBERT REVIEWED FRENCH AID IN IVORY COAST AND, LIKE FERRANDI, EXPRESSED MOST CONCERN OVER SLOWNESS OF IVOIRIANIZATION, PARTICULARLY IN EDUCATION, AND EXPECTATION THAT EUROPEAN, PARTICULARLY FRENCH, PRESENCE WILL INCREASE. HE ALSO DESCRIBED GOF EFFORTS TO STIMULATE SMALL FRENCH INVESTORS TO GO INTO IVORY COAST; SUCH EFFORTS NOT VERY SUCCESSFUL.

6. REBEYROL WAS POLITE BUT RESERVED IN APPROACH TO SMITH, DESPITE REITERATING HIS PLEASURE AT BILATERAL TALKS OF LAST YEAR. HE WAS UNWILLING TO SPECULATE ON HOUPHOUET SUCCESSION QUESTION. HE WAS EMPHATIC IN LAYING FULL RESPONSIBILITY ON HOUPHOUET FOR CONCEPT OF "DIALOGUE" WITH SOUTH AFRICA AND FOR RECOGNIZING BIAFRA ("PROBABLY A MISTAKE"). HE THOUGHT OAU PRESSURES LEFT HOUPHOUET NO CHOICE BUT TO BREAK WITH ISRAEL.

7. FOCCART RECEIVED SMITH AT 1900 ON MARCH 8 AT ELYSEE. AFTER EXCHANGING PLEASANTRIES, FOCCART GAVE WARM PRAISE DAVID NEWSON, WHOSE VISITS HE HAD APPRECIATED. RECALLED MEETING ASSISTANT SECRETARY EASUM IN OUAGADOUGOU AND ASKED AFTER AMBASSADOR ANDERSON IN COTONOU.

8. SMITH ASKED FOCCART ABOUT HOUPHOUET'S VIEWS OF SOVIETS, TO WHICH FOCCART REPLIED THAT HIS ANTI-SOVIET ATTITUDE PROBABLY CAME FROM HIS BEING CONVINCED SOME YEARS AGO THAT SOVIET EMBASSY WAS SPYING IN ABIDJAN. FOCCART SAID HE NEVER SAW EVIDENCE. HE THOUGHT, HOWEVER, THAT RELATIONS WERE IMPROVING AGAIN.  
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9. FOCCART PRAISED HOUPHOUET BY SAYING DE GAULLE DESCRIBED HIM AS "REAL STATESMAN". IN RESPONSE TO SMITH'S QUESTION HE SAID HE WAS NOT WORRIED OVER SUCCESSION QUESTION BECAUSE TRIBAL DIFFERENCES HAD BEEN PRETTY WELL SUBMERGED THERE. NEVERTHELESS, HE HOPED HOUPHOUET WOULD HAVE A LONG LIFE.

10. IN WISHING SMITH A HAPPY TOUR IN ABIDJAN, FOCCART OFFERED

TO INFORM FRENCH AMBASSADOR OF SMITH'S CALL. ALL IN ALL, IT WAS  
BRIEF CORDIAL ENCOUNTER.VOLPE

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## Message Attributes

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**Draft Date:** 12 MAR 1974  
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**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
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**To:** STATE ABIDJAN  
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